About fifty years after the Mameluke conquest of Acre in 1291, the German author Ludolph of Suchem declared: “The sole cause for the loss of the city were the quarrels (maledicta discordia) between the Italians residing there.”¹ In particular, he declared that the arrogance of the Venetians, Pisans and Genoese had led to the city’s fall and ruin. His complaint is one of many charges, repeatedly raised since the early 13th century, against the three most prominent Italian maritime republics of the 12th/13th century: that they betrayed the welfare of the Crusader States and ultimately even the city of Acre in pursuit of their own commercial interests. These accusations are based on Jacques de Vitry’s verdict, who as bishop of Acre had witnessed the Italians himself during the Fifth Crusade. In his opinion, their bitter disputes and conflicts among themselves, their reciprocal envy, their insatiable greed and their trade relations with the Muslims inhibited them from seriously engaging in the campaign against the Muslims (i.e. against Egypt).² Only a few years after the fall of Acre, the Venetian Marino Sanudo Torsello adopted this damning viewpoint in his treatise on the Crusades, thereby influencing public opinion about the maritime republics for centuries to come.³ Ludolph of Suchem’s perspective is influenced by it as well.

² Jacques de Vitry, Historia Orientalis bk. 2 (Historia Hierosolimitana abbreviata) chap. 73, in Gesta Dei per Francos, sive orientalium expeditionum, et regni Francorum Hierosolimitani historia, ed. Jacques de Bongars, 2 (Hanau, 1611), cols. 1047–1124, at col. 1089.
³ Marino Sanudo Torsello, Liber secretorum fidelium crucis 2.8.5, ed. Bongars in Gesta dei per Francos, 2 (Hanau, 1611; repr. Jerusalem, 1972), 186. His description of the fall of Acre and the
Were historiographers from Venice, Genoa and Pisa concerned to portray the history of their cities since the 1290s, prompted by the fall of Acre to describe this event as well? Everyone who had successfully escaped from Acre had much to tell, but only a very few wrote their experiences down, or found someone to do it for them. In such cases, the authors preserving their testimonies in writing were usually clerics. The eyewitness accounts of the conduct of the Italian merchants during the siege of Acre are revealing enough to make it appear worthwhile to take a closer look at the city chronicles.\textsuperscript{4} However, was the fall of Acre an event later generations in Venice, Pisa, and Genoa still remembered?

I Genoa

Let us take a look at Genoa first. The fall of Acre became an issue in Genoa with exceptional speed. Genoa endeavored, much earlier than other communities, to record all significant events and important developments considered worth remembering. Although there was no longer a Genoese merchants quarter in Acre on the eve of the siege, Genoese merchants were not officially barred from conducting trade in the city. They continued to send their commercial fleets on trade missions to Acre from other neighboring coastal cities, Tyre in particular. Genoese seamen on board two fully loaded merchant galleys arriving at Acre in the final days of the siege witnessed the distress of the crowds gathered at the harbor, desperately on the lookout for a means of escape. Captain Andrea Pellato, soon a well-known figure in Genoa, ferried large numbers of refugees on his two galleys to ships anchored further out at sea, forcing the captains to take the penniless on board as well. Pellato also brought many people to safety on his own ships. News of Andrea Pellato’s good deeds certainly reached Genoa by the end of 1291 and was welcome material for the city